

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Previously presented claims 1-6, 10-12 and 15-16 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Seiji (JP 10-057730). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended above to recite more specifically that in an example embodiment the tapered jig includes through-holes that extend from the top planer surface 350 of the tapered jig opposed to the molding die to a surface of tapered jig other than the surface opposed to the molding die. In this regard, with reference to Figure 4, the illustrated example embodiment includes through-holes 33 extending from the top planer surface 350 to a surface remote from the molding die. Through-holes are also defined at the base of the tapered surfaces and include protrusions 32 which protrude from the tapered molding surfaces. Independent claim 1 specifically refers to the inclusion of through-holes extending from the top planer surface 350 as noted above whereas new independent claim 18 refers to the inclusion of protrusions 32.

It is respectfully submitted that the Seiji publication cited by the Examiner does not teach or in anyway suggest through-holes extending from the top planer surface as recited in claim 1 or the inclusion of protrusions as recited in new independent claim 18. In this regard, it can be seen that Seiji provides "heights 10" and through-holes 11 for determining the configuration of the end of the honeycomb structure as shown in Figure 1. However, it is clear that there is no through-hole extending to the upper surface of height 10 which defines the planer upper surface of the tapered jig, as required by claim 1, nor is there any protrusion extending from holes 11, as required by new independent claim 18. Thus the invention of those claims is not anticipated by Seiji. Moreover, because there is no teaching or suggestion of modifying Seiji so as to provide through-holes and/or protrusions as claimed by applicant, the invention is submitted to be unobvious from Seiji. Indeed, Seiji does not disclose or teach the unique and

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advantageous characteristics of the invention made possible by providing through-holes and/or protrusions as specified.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection over Seiji is requested.

Claims 7-9 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Seiji in view of Ishihara. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 7-9 are submitted to be patentable over Seiji for the reasons advanced above. The Examiner's further reliance on Ishihara does not overcome the deficiencies of Seiji noted above. It is therefore respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as well.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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